

**ENGL 562: DIGITAL METHODS FOR THE HUMANITIES**  
**PROFESSOR JESSICA PRESSMAN**  
**FALL 2018**

**Course Description**

This new course is a revolutionary experiment and pilot program for SDSU's Digital Humanities Initiative that will provide students with an introduction to media studies, theory, and history as well as to a wide variety of digital methods for research, writing, and thinking. Lead by a scholar of electronic literature and new media theory, students will learn how new digital methods can serve the Humanities and also how they inform the emergent field known as "Digital Humanities."

Each week will bring a different guest lecturer, a professor at SDSU and a member of SDSU's Digital Humanities Initiative ([dh.sdsu.edu](http://dh.sdsu.edu)), who will teach a different digital method from a different disciplinary perspective. The range of learning includes, but is not limited to, virtual reality methods of studying history (History), empirical studies of social media use and identity construction (Journalism and Media Studies), computational analysis (Linguistics), info-visualizations and Digital Humanities practices (Library), and more. This is an opportunity to learn about the humanities via digital methods and also to learn about Digital Humanities in the first-ever course of its kind offered at SDSU.

Learning Objectives:

- Assess, evaluate, and interpret information (including visualizations, data and text) presented in a variety of digital formats
- Recognize and articulate how medial formats and contexts (including orality, print, and digital) shape information and its reception
- Analyze interface design and recognize the relationships of power mediated through it
- Critically assess how digital media inform identity
- Reflect on how changes in medial contexts impact users and their societies

**Administrative Information**

Email: <a href="mailto:jpressman@sdsu.edu">jpressman@sdsu.edu</a> *Do not expect a response within 24 hours	Course Website: <a href="https://fall2018-eng562.jessicapressman.com">https://fall2018-eng562.jessicapressman.com</a>
Office: AL 261 Office hours: M 12-1:30, and by appointment	Course Meeting: MW 2-3:15 Room: LSS-365 (Life Sciences South)
English Subject Librarian (for help with research, citations, bibliography, etc.)	Markel Tumlin <a href="mailto:mtumlin@rohan.sdsu.edu">mtumlin@rohan.sdsu.edu</a>
Digital Humanities Librarian: Digital Humanities Center (Love Library)	Dr. Pamella Lach <a href="mailto:plach@sdsu.edu">plach@sdsu.edu</a>

**NOTES:**

- Since this course depends upon the volunteered time of faculty from across campus, our schedule and reading list is subject to change.
- Since we will have guest lecturers most weeks, our reading discussions will be confined (most weeks) to only one day per week. However, the readings are intended to support your understanding of the lecture, and you will be assigned reading enough for both classes. Please plan your reading time accordingly so that you can *be prepared to discuss the reading on the day noted below*.
- Since our class meetings fall on the Jewish high holy days, we will lose two in-class meetings this semester. Though we will not be meeting, I will assign work for those meetings (reading and viewing) so that we do not miss too much learning time due to scheduling conflicts.

\*\*Much of the following syllabus is inspired by Johanna Drucker's UCLA course "Intro to Digital Humanities: DH 101." I am grateful to Professor Drucker for making this invaluable resource free online, at <http://dh101.humanities.ucla.edu>

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**ASSIGNMENTS**

Participation: 15%

Short Blog Responses: 20%

3 DH Tool Experiments: 10% each (total of 30%)

Final Project: 25%

Final Project proposal (5%)

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**-Attendance and Participation (15%)**

This is *your* class, and your attendance and participation is vital to its success.

Attendance matters and counts towards your grade. Come to class prepared to discuss the novels in depth; this means having read the *entire* text assigned *before* the first class meeting dedicated to that text.

**- Your participation grade includes engaging in dialogue in class.** This means speaking and listening actively, attentively, and respectfully. (If you have fear of speaking in public, this seminar is a good place to learn to address that fear. Please come see me early in the term to discuss strategies for dealing with this fear).

**-Your participation grade includes an in-person meeting with the professor.**

**-You will give a 5-minute presentation on one of the texts.** This presentation should serve to start the class's conversation for the day. You will point us to a question from the day's reading and to the specific passage in the text that sparked that inquiry for you. You will get the discussion rolling. You should be able to direct the class to a passage for close reading and/or a series of questions for discussion.

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### **-Weekly Blog Posts (20%)**

You will write (300-500 words) **blog responses to the reading *and* each provide a comment on a peer's blog each week.** These short critical responses and comments will be posted to the course blog *before the second-class* meeting of the week. They will serve to extend the conversation and coverage of the course by allowing you to 1) express, share, and comment upon interests, questions, and concerns related to the readings and also to 2) enable the professor to address or incorporate these topics in that week's lecture. The blog is intended to extend the space for learning and discussion.

\* *Late posts do not receive credit.*

-You will be given an *overall* grade for blog posts, based on completion and content, not a grade for each post. Rubric for grading is available on our website.

Your Blog Grade is based on 2-parts: 1) a completion grade, and 2) a content grade.

<b>The completion component of the blog grade</b> requires you to have the following number of posts:	<b>The content component of the blog grade</b> is based on the following grading rubric
A= 10-13 posts B= 7-9 posts C= 5-6 posts D= 3-4 posts F= 2 or less	A= Post contains a focused thesis or question and close reading of a passage, B= Post contains a close reading of content but no focused question or thesis C= Post contains no analysis of text (no close reading), just summary and undirected ideas D=Post contains little substantive thinking as content

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### **-3 DH Tool Experiments (10% each, 30% total)**

These short assignments allow you to experiment with DH tools in low-stakes ways. The assignment has 2 parts:

- 1) You will learn and use a tool to produce some kind of “product” (an info-visualization, an interactive story, etc.)
- 2) You will write a short (300-500) word explanation of what you did, what you learned, and why this process mattered.

-You can redo these experiments for a better grade. Revisions are due *before* the next deadline for a creative-critical intervention.

### **-Final Project (25, plus project proposal 5%= 30%)**

This project provides an opportunity to explore your primary interests from the course in a creative-critical project that uses *at least one* DH tool/method to explore an argument about *at least one* DH project or text from the syllabus.

- You will craft an argument/thesis about the project/text/or dataset and then explore that argument using a DH tool. Your essay can be presented within the digital tool/method or as text that accompanies and explains the visualization/project.
- You will write a brief project proposal, upon which you will receive feedback before starting your final project.
- You will write a 5-6 page (8-10 page for graduate students) essay, double-spaced, and post it to our course blog.
- \*\*\**Late essays are docked 1/3 of a grade for each day late.*

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### **Extra Credit (Total of 1%)**

There are multiple ways to earn extra credit in this class, all of which will be listed on our website.

\*\*To receive credit for any of these events, you must not only attend but also write a blog post that situates that event (the reading, the literature, the discussion) in the context of our class

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### **REQUIRED READING**

Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth, eds. *A Companion to Digital Humanities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004)

[online]://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/

-designated in syllabus as [ACDH]

--All other non-web texts are on reserve in Love Library, including

-Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld, Todd Presner, and Jeffery Schnapp, *Digital Humanities* (MIT Press, 2012)

-Johanna Drucker, *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production* (Harvard UP, MetaLab, 2014)

-N. Katherine Hayles and Jessica Pressman, *Comparative Textual Media: Transforming the Humanities in the Postprint Era* (Univ. of Minnesota Press: 2013)

-Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, eds. *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (UC Press, 2011)—available online through SDSU Library

-Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage* (Penguin, 1967)

-Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (Verso, 2013)

---*Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (Verso, 2005)

-- available online through SDSU Library

-Edward Tufte, *Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (1983)

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## **READING SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1: Introduction to the Context and Purpose of the Course**

**August 27:** Introduction

**August 29:** Patricia Cohen, "Digital Keys for Unlocking the Humanities' Riches" *The New York Times* (2010)

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### **Week 2: Digital Humanities**

**September 3:** *Labor Day, no class*

**September 5:** -Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld, Todd Presner, and Jeffery Schnapp, *Digital\_Humanities* (MIT Press, 2012): Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27)

-Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, "The Digital Humanities and Humanities Computing: An Introduction" [ACDH]

#### **EXPLORE/VIEW:**

"What Everyone Says: The Humanities in Public Discourse"

-Data viz tools

#### **Additional Reading:**

Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld, Todd Presner, and Jeffery Schnapp, *Digital\_Humanities* (MIT Press, 2012)

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### **Week 3: Digital Humanities & Humanities Computing**

**September 10:** *Rosh Hashanah, no class*

**September 12: Guest lecture: Dr. Pamella Lach (Digital Humanities Librarian).**

Meet in Digital Humanities Center, LA 61)

- Susan Hockey, "The History of Humanities Computing" [ACDH]

-Alan Liu, "The State of the Digital Humanities: A Report and Critique" (2011)

#### **EXPLORE/VIEW: DH Tools**

- Wordle

-Timeline

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#### **Week 4: Literary Studies as Media Studies**

**September 17:** Thomas Rommel, “Literary Studies” [ACDH]

-N. Katherine Hayles and Jessica Pressman, introduction to *Comparative Textual Media: Transforming the Humanities in the Postprint Era* (2013): “Making, Critique: A Media Framework” [PDF]

EXPLORE/VIEW: electronic literature

-“Electronic Literature” short video by Mark Marino

-*Walden, a game* -Electronic Literature Collections, vol. 1, vol. 2, OR vol. 3

**September 19:** *Yom Kippur, no class*

Additional Reading/Graduate Students

Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage* (1967)

**\*\*\*SUNDAY 9/23 @ midnight: First Tools experiment due\*\*\***

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#### **Week 5: Distant Reading and Computational Data Analysis**

**September 24:** excerpt from Franco Moretti’s *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (Verso, 2005), Chapter 1 (pp. 1-33). [PDF]

EXPLORE/VIEW:

-Stanford Humanities Lab Projects

- Cultural Analytics Lab, “4535 Time Magazine Covers, 1923-2009”

**September 26: Guest lecture: Professor Gabriel Doyle (Linguistics)**

-Jan Hajič, “Linguistics Meets Exact Sciences” [ACDH]

Additional Reading/Graduate Students

Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (Verso, 2013) OR *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (Verso, 2005).

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#### **Week 6: Book History**

**October 1: Guest lecture: Anna Culbertson (Special Collections Librarian),** meet in Special Collections (Marsh Science Fiction Room, in Love Library 160)

-Michelle Levy and Tom Mole, “Introduction” to *The Broadview Introduction to Book History* (Broadview Press, 2017): xiii-xx. [PDF]

### EXPLORE/VIEW

-“In the Beginning was the Word” (UCSB) History of the page animation

### **October 3: Literary Archives**

-Kenneth Goldsmith, “Ubu Web” (2011)

- “About the Archive: “Editorial Policy Statement and Procedures” from the Walt Whitman Archive

### EXPLORE/VIEW: Literary Archives

Walt Whitman Archive

Emily Dickinson Archive

Rossetti Archive

Women Writers Project

### Additional Reading:

Richard Darnton, “What is the History of Books?” (1984) [PDF]

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### **Week 7: Mapping and Visualization**

**October 8:** Edward Tufte, *Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (1983), Chapter 1: “Graphical Practice” [PDF]

-Johanna Drucker, Chapter 2: “Interpreting Visualization: Visualizing Interpretation” from *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production* (Harvard UP, MetaLab, 2014) [PDF]

### EXPLORE/VIEW

-“Mapping the Republic of Letters” (Stanford)

-“HyperMedia Berlin” (Todd Presner, UCLA)

### **October 10: Guest lecture: Professor André Skupin (Geography)**

### EXPLORE/VIEW

-Visual Complexity tool

-“History of Cartography” at Wikipedia

### Additional Reading/Graduate Students

Johanna Drucker, *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production* (Harvard UP, MetaLab, 2014)

**\*\*\*SUNDAY 10/21 @ midnight: Second Tools experiment due\*\*\***

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### **Week 8: Social Media**

**October 15:** Lisa Nakamura, "'Words with Friends': Socially Networked Reading on Goodreads" (*PMLA*, 2013) [PDF]

#### **VIEW/EXPLORE**

-Lev Manovich and Cultural Analytics Lab, "SelfieCity" (2014-15)

### **October 17: Guest lecture: Professor Nathian Rodriguez (Journalism, Media Studies)**

-Nathian Shae Rodriguez, Jennifer Huemmer, Lindsey E. Blumell, "Mobile Masculinities: An Investigation of Networked Masculinities in Gay Dating Apps" (2016) [PDF]

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### **Week 9: Media Archaeology**

**October 22:** Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, "Introduction: An Archaeology of Media Archeology" (2011): pp. 1-21 [PDF]

#### **VIEW/EXPLORE:**

- "Artifacts of Media Archaeology: Inside Professor Erkki Huhtamo's Office"  
- "Phono-Post - A Media Archaeology of Voice Mail" with Thomas Y. Levin (Princeton University)

**October 24:** -Jason Farman, "The Forgotten Kaleidoscope Craze in Victorian England" (2015)

-Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, "Platform Studies: Frequently Questioned Answers" (2009)

#### **VIEW/EXPLORE:**

-Bruce Sterling, "The Dead Media Manifesto" for The Dead Media Project:

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### **Week 10: Interfaces and Project Design**

**October 29:** excerpt from Steven Johnson, *Interface Culture*, "Chapter 1: Bitmapping, an introduction" (1997): pp. 11-41. [PDF]

#### **EXPLORE/VIEW**



TBD

**October 31: DH Lesson by Dr. Pam Lach** scaffolding lesson on user experience design.  
Meet in DH Center

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**Week 11: Virtual Reality**

**November 5:** excerpt from Jean Baudrillard's *Simulations* (1981)

**EXPLORE/VIEW**

- David Salz, "Virtual Vaudeville" (*Vectors* journal, 2005)
- Caitlin Fisher, "Augmented Reality Freedom Stories"

**November 7: Guest lecture: Professor David Cline (History)**

**\*\*\*SUNDAY 11/11 @ midnight: Third Tools experiment due\*\*\***

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**Week 12: Public Humanities and Social Activism**

**November 12:** *Veterans Day, no class*

**November 14: Guest lecture: Dr. Joanna Brooks** (Associate Vice-President of Faculty Advancement, Professor of English and Comparative Literature)

**EXPLORE/VIEW**

- "Public Secrets" (2007), Sharon Daniels and Erik Loyer
- "Torn Apart/Separados" (2018), Manan Ahmed, Alex Gil, Moacir P. de Sá Pereira, Roopika Risam, Maira E. Álvarez, Sylvia A. Fernández, Linda Rodriguez, and Merisa Martinez

**Additional Reading:**

- Black Digital Humanities Projects & Resources
- Social Justice and the Digital Humanities - Projects

**\*\*\*SUNDAY 11/18 @ midnight: Final project proposal due\*\*\***

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**Week 13: Digital Publishing**

**November 19: Guest lecture: Professor Angel David Nieves (History)**

**November 21:** *Thanksgiving, no class*

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**Week 14: Workshops for final projects**

**November 26:** Workshopping final projects (DH Center)

**November 28:** Workshopping final projects (DH Center)

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**Week 15: Workshops and Student Presentations**

**December 3:** Workshopping final projects (DH Center)

**December 5:** Student presentations/showcase (DH Center) with Digital History course  
(Prof. Angel David Nieves)

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**Week 16: Conclusion**

**December 10:** Student presentations/showcase (DH Center) with Digital History course  
(Prof. Angel David Nieves)

**December 12:** Concluding Discussion

***\*\*Sunday 12/16 at midnight: Final Project due, posted to the blog\*\****

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**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

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***NOTE:*** *This syllabus is subject to change.*

**SDSU as “safe space”**

The CSU has affirmed its commitment to ‘protecting access, affordability, intellectual freedom, inclusivity, and diversity for all students . . . including supporting DACA students.’ Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against students, faculty, and staff on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, nationality, immigration status and other categories of identity is prohibited. If you have concerns about your status at the university, please visit <http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/EOP/> for information or contact the Dean of Students or the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in your College.”

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

I take teaching seriously, and I expect you to take seriously your work as a student. That means that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonest includes, but is not limited to: (a) using assignments that you wrote for another class, (b) representing work done by someone else as your own (i.e., plagiarism), and (c) copying someone else’s work on an assignment, basic cheating. Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities for further action. If you have questions at all, you should consult me immediately.

**DISABILITY STATEMENT**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at [\(619\) 594-6473](tel:6195946473). To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not

retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.